

Message Text

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41

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 FEAE-00 TRSE-00 SP-02 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03 OMB-01 /031 W

----- 027654

R 071339Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 820

INFO USDOC WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 8346

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ECRP ENRG EMIN SY

SUBJ: MINERALS QUESTIONNAIRE AND PETROLEUM STATISTICS

REF: (A) CERP 4291, (B) CERP 4250

1. EMBASSY WAS DELAYED APPROACHING SARG OFFICIALS FOR INFORMATION TO COMPLETE SUBJECT CERP REPORTS DUE TO CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT AUGUST 8; MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND MINERAL RESOURCES MUSTAPHA WAS REPLACED BY ISA DARWISH, A BAATH PARTY OFFICIAL WITH NO PREVIOUS PETROLEUM OR MINERALS EXPRIENCE (HE PREVIOUSLY ADMINISTERED A LARGE STATE TEXTILE PLANT). WE SENT QUESTIONNAIRES TO DARWISH AUGUST 30, WITH COVERING LETTER EXPLAINING PURPOSE OF OUR INTEREST IN THESE STATISTICS, TOGETHER WITH A SET OF "MINERALS YEARBOOKS". HE NEVER REPLIED TO OUR LETTER AND OUR ATTEMPTS TO FOLLOW UP AT THE DEPUTY MINISTER LEVEL HAVE NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL. LAST WEEK DEPUTY MINISTER NADER NABULSI TOLD EMBASSY COMMERCIAL OFFICER THAT DARWISH HAD DECIDED NOT TO MAKE AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY THE REQUESTED INFORMATION "AT THIS TIME".

2. I HAVE NOT YET HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO CALL UPON THE NEW PETROLEUM MINISTER, BUT I INTEND DISCUSS THIS MATTER WITH HIM WHEN I DO. MEANWHILE, EMBASSY WILL PREPARE INTERIM REPORT BASED ON PUBLISHED DATA AND WHATEVER RELIABLE INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED FROM PRIVATE SOURCES.

MURPHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CERP 4291, CERP 4250
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976DAMASC08346
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760451-1025
From: DAMASCUS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761267/aaaacfy.tel
Line Count: 60
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: wolfsd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 JUN 2004 by hattaycs>; APPROVED <06 AUG 2004 by wolfsd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MINERALS QUESTIONNAIRE AND PETROLEUM STATISTICS
TAGS: ECRP, ENRG, EMIN, SY
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006